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Title: Need to set up a Central University in Darjeeling, West Bengal.

SHRI D. NARBULA (DARJEELING): There is a strong and persistent demand to have a separate University to be set up in Hill region of Darjeeling. At present all colleges of the Hills are affiliated to the North Bengal University which is imparting conventional courses only. Further conventional education is not job-oriented. Also, Majority of the Students of the Hills seeking admission for Post Graduation Courses in different Universities of the State find it difficult to get admission. I would emphasize introduction of Hill-oriented courses such as Eco-tourism, High-altitude science, Mountain culture and Sociology, Bio-resource management, Environmental and Forestry, Floriculture and Medicinal plants, Rural technology besides the conventional courses for the benefit of the Hill students. The Darjeeling hills are one of the hot spots of biodiversity and are very rich in bio-resources. Studies on bio-resources, bio-diversity, biotechnology for the developmental activities and on cultural heritage languages in the Darjeeling Hills are lagging behind due to lack of a University in the region.

Moreover, the academic session of North Bengal University does not suit the Colleges of Darjeeling hills area as they have a long Winter vacation of three months from December to February. The present Government, during the Eleventh Plan has a proposal to set up sixteen Central Universities in different parts of the Country. The long standing demand of the People of the Hills will be fulfilled if one of these sixteen Universities is established in Darjeeling. I, therefore, urge upon the Government to set up a full-fledged University in the hills areas of Darjeeling under an Act of the Parliament.